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ABSTRACT

A working meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, September 13-15, 1973, was called to consider three main topics: (1) the current status of exchange of information on population and family planning; (2) the feasibility of establishing national and regional networks for cclllection and dissemination of information on population and family planning; and (3) the operational aspect of such networks. This report summarizes the proceedings of panel discussions and work groups and lists the recommendations posited by the conference participants. (EMH)

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ASIAN POPULATION STUDIES SERIES

No. 19/A

ASIAN RESOURCES FOR A POPULATION LIBRARY INFORMATION NETWORK

REPORT OF A WORKING MEETING
(BANGKOK, THAILAND, 13-15 SEPTEMBER 1973)

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE FAR EAST
Bangkok, Thailand

UNITED NATIONS

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IR 003 647

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E/CN. 11/1114

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FOREWORD

Population problems are not isolated. As the Second Asian Population Conference emphasized, they are part of overall social and economic problems and are therefore widely varied. As the problems vary, so do the solutions and these often require combined national and international effort.

The Asian Population Conference in November 1972 recommended the bringing together of Asian scholars, policy-makers and programme officials to discuss innovative approaches to the collection, translation, processing and dissemination of information and knowledge suited to Asian conditions with the goal of motivating them towards improving the dissemination of such data. Moreover, the Conference requested the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East to take the lead in bringing these people together. Happily, circumstances often work to bring about a conjunction of the means necessary to start to implement such directives—in this case the Carolina Population Center (CPC), Chapel Hill, United States of America, and ECAFE.

In August 1970, CPC and ECAFE held exploratory conversations concerning areas of co-operation. One area agreed upon was future joint sponsorship of seminars or training seminars in the ECAFE region "for orientation of population librarians and documentalists, for attracting qualified persons into the field"....., another was "joint sponsorship of an international conference on population library and documentation services".

Work loads, funding and time combined to put both organizations in the right place at the right time in September 1973. CPC, with the assistance of funds from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), recruited an international teaching team from Europe, Asia and the United States and brought it to Bangkok for a eight-day library institute held from 5 to 12 September. ECAFE followed up with a two-and-a-half day working meeting on the development of a population information network to which librarians/documentalists, administrators and funding agency representatives were invited. ECAFE's handling of the administrative and technical arrangements for the institute and the meeting was funded through CPC's USAID technical assistance grant.

The two organizations worked in collaboration with the Association for Population/ Family Planning Libraries and Information Centres (APLIC).

The teamwork between East and West resulted in concentrated regional, sub-regional and national efforts to develop national dialogues, including the exchange of inventories of population information, and also to provide for the training of librarians and documentalists.

The task force set up at the working meeting has met. With the advisory and financial assistance of UNFPA, the Inter-Governmental Co-ordinating Committee for Population and Family Planning in Southeast Asia (IGCC), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the Asia Foundation and ECAFE, guidelines are being prepared for regional programme development.

Documentation programme development is going forward in the ECAFE region at a pace which exceeds the hopes of all concerned. However, if this satisfying momentum is to be maintained, it is necessary that the organizations already involved continue to take an active interest in the work and that the interest of other organizations be aroused.

The publication of this report of the Working Meeting on Asian Resources for a Population Information Network has been made possible thanks to financial assistance provided from the USAID grant to CPC.

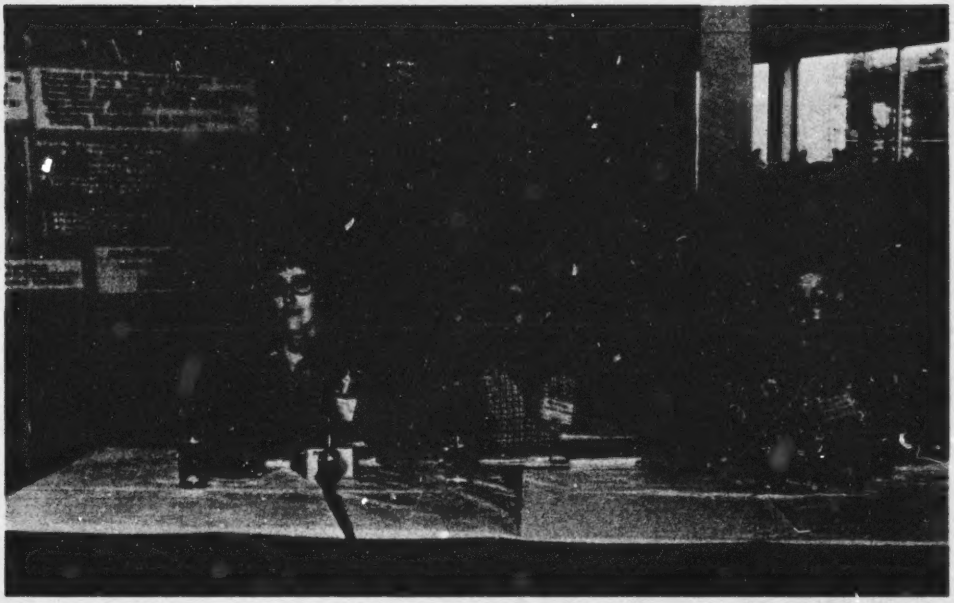
On behalf of Mr. J.B.P. Maramis, Executive Secretary of ECAFE, the Deputy Executive Secretary presented the opening address. Other opening remarks were made on behalf of the Population Division of ECAFE, and by Miss Bates Buckner, Head of the Technical Information Service, CPC.

The Meeting elected as it's chairman Miss Uthai Dhutiyabhodhi, Chief Librarian of the Siriraj Medical Library, Faculty of Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand. In the photo, which shows Miss Uthai receiving congratulations at the close of the meeting are (l. to r.): Mrs. Homa Asayesh of the Documentation Centre and Library for Population and Family Planning, Ministry of Health, Tehran; Miss Uthai; Miss Rosita Matro of the Population Institute, University of the Philippines, Manila; Mrs. Leonisa V. Fernandez of the Bureau of the Census and Statistics, Manila; Miss Afsar Mansourzadeh of the Population Centre, Pahlavi University, Shiraz; and Mr. Gelasio Y. Anglo of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, Manila.

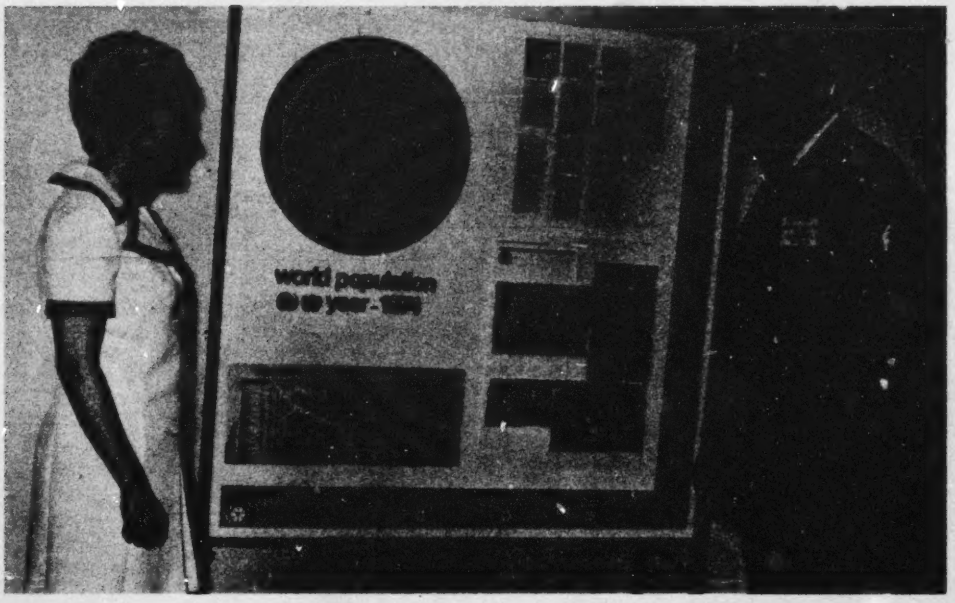
The Working Meeting on Asian Resources for a Population Library Information Network was held in Bangkok from 13 to 15 September 1973. The two-and-a-half day programme consisted of six plenary and eight working group meetings.

Topics discussed at the meeting included the "Need for co-ordinated population flow at the national level", introduced by the Secretary to the President of the Government of India; and "Value of the information factor in the process of development planning and action programmes", by the UNDP/UNICEF Development Support Communication Service (Asia).

Officers of the meeting included (left to right): Mrs. Parlinah Moedjono of Indonesia (Vice-Chairman); Miss Jouhg Im Kim of the Republic of Korea (Rapporteur); Mrs. Rosalia S. David of the Philippines (Rapporteur); and Mr. A.B.M. Nurul Huq of Bangladesh (Vice-Chairman).



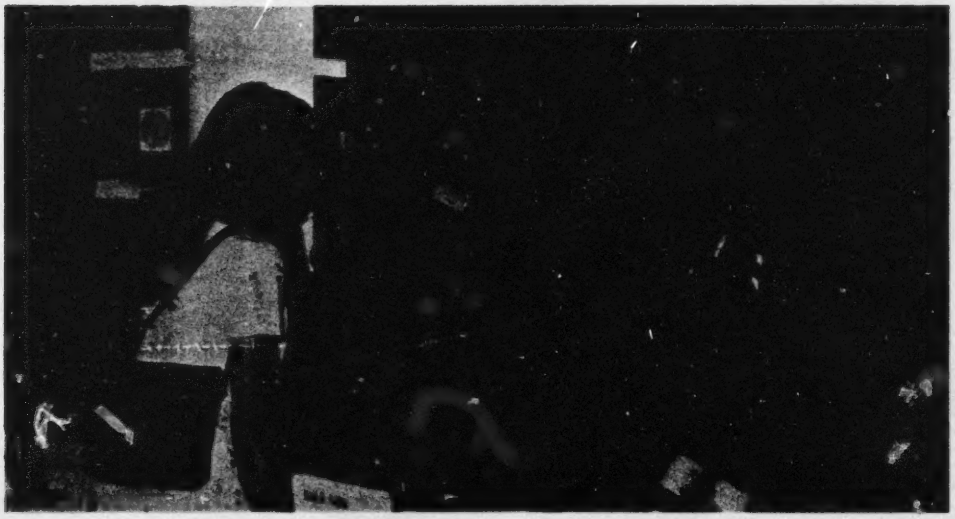
Recommendations made by the Population Library Development Institute which preceded the Working Meeting, were read by Miss Catherine Fogle (left), Conference Co-ordinator of the Technical Information Service, CPC. With her in the photo are Mrs. Kathryn H. Speert of the International Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction, Columbia University, New York, and Mrs. Helen K. Kolbe of the Population Information Program, George Washington University Medical Center, Washington, DC.



Ways in which population librarians and documentalists could support the aims of World Population Year 1974 were discussed at the Working Meeting, where related publicity materials were displayed.

Prior to the Working Meeting and at the same venue, a Population Library Development Institute was held from 5 to 12 September 1973. Attended by many of the same participants, the Institute consisted of nine workshops on the following themes: policy-making; administration; technical services (acquisitions); technical services (cataloguing); technical services (serials); public services (inter-library loan, circulation); public services (reference, bibliographies, selective dissemination of information); audio-visual materials; technical processing; and a final review of administration. The Institute was organized by CPC, ECAFE and APLIC.

At the conclusion of the Institute, participants received certificates of attendance. The photo shows Miss Clarita G. Valledor, Librarian, Family Planning Organization of the Philippines, receiving her certificate.



One of the purposes of the meeting was to give population personnel from different backgrounds an opportunity to meet each other. In the photo, discussing a problem informally, are (l. to r.) Miss Pansy Tun Thein of IPPF, Thailand; Miss Taree Bunnag of PPAT; Miss Lily Lee Suk Fang of IPPF, Malaysia; and Miss Catharine A.M. Stubbings of IPPF, United Kingdom.

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORKING MEETING

Introduction

1. The Second Asian Population Conference, organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) at Tokyo, Japan, in November 1972, observed that there was a need for individuals and organizations actively to share programme and research information. The Conference suggested that Asian scholars, policy-makers and programme officials be brought together with a view to evolving innovative approaches to the collection, translation, processing and dissemination of information and knowledge. The "Declaration of Population Strategy for Development" adopted by the Second Asian Population Conference stated that provision should be made in population programmes to ensure that pertinent information reached policy-makers, opinion-leaders and socio-economic planners; development of new tools of communication and utilization of existing ones should be encouraged so that knowledge might be shared at all levels of society.

2. With a view to implementing the recommendations, ECAFE and the Carolina Population Center (CPC), United States of America, in collaboration with the Association for Population/Family Planning Libraries and Information Centers (APLIC) organized the Working Meeting on Asian Resources for a Population Information Network, at Bangkok, Thailand, from 13 to 15 September 1973. The Working Meeting followed the Population Library Development Institute conducted at Bangkok, from 5 to 12 September 1973, by CPC and ECAFE in collaboration with APLIC.

3. The Working Meeting was called upon to consider three main topics: (a) the current status of exchange of information on population and family planning; (b) the feasibility of establishing national and regional networks for collection and dissemination of information on population and family planning; (c) the operational aspects of such networks.

Attendance

4. The Working Meeting was attended by 128 librarians, documentalists and administrators from information centres and libraries, and by invitees from funding agencies, from the following 15 countries : Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Viet-Nam, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. Participants included experts from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Asian Institute for Economic Development and Planning, the Asia Foundation, the Colombo Plan Bureau, the Council for Technical Co-operation in South and Southeast Asia, the Ford Foundation, Inter-Governmental Co-ordinating Committee for Population and Family Planning (IGCC), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the Population Council, the Rockefeller Foundation, the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Six observers also attended.

5. All participants attended in their individual capacity, and a detailed list is attached as annex I.

Opening address

6. An opening address by Mr. J.B.P. Maramis, the Executive Secretary of ECAFE, was read by Mr. A.G. Menon, his officer-in-charge.

7. The Executive Secretary, stressing the need for strengthening and co-ordinating the existing resources of Asian population libraries, documentation centres and information sources, drew attention to the immediate problem that the institutional development of population libraries had not automatically followed the "publication explosion" and that too few specialized libraries or documentation centres existed. Libraries were too often under-staffed and under-equipped, a fact which handicapped research and programme implementation.

8. ECAFE would suggest three immediate ways to overcome that problem:
(a) through recognition by countries of the importance of the information resources,
(b) through co-ordination as a means to utilize national resources more effectively, and
(c) through planned expansion linked to current needs and to the needs of the future.

9. He emphasized the importance of the Working Meeting which had been designed to enable administrators, librarians and those who represented the donor agencies to suggest concrete measures, such as library networks and increased regional co-ordination, by means of which available information and knowledge could be identified and used.

Election of officers

10. Miss U. Dhutiyabhodhi of Thailand was elected Chairman of the Working Meeting. Mrs. P. Moedjono of Indonesia and Mr. A.B.M. Nurul Huq of Bangladesh were named Vice-Chairman by the Chairman. The rapporteurs were Miss J.I. Kim of the Republic of Korea and Mrs. R.S. David of the Philippines.

Adoption of the agenda

11. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:
(1) Inaugural address by the Executive Secretary
(2) Election of officers
(3) Adoption of the agenda
(4) The assessment of the need for a population library information network in Asia
(5) The general functions of, and feasibility of establishing, a population library network
(6) Creation and operation of the Asian population library information network
(7) Consideration and adoption of the report
(8) Closing ceremony

Programme

12. Theme I, "The assessment of the need for a population information network in Asia", was considered in the plenary. Theme II, "The general functions of, and feasibility of establishing, a population information network", and III, "The creation and operation of an Asian population information network," were considered both in the plenary meetings and by working groups. There were six plenary meetings and eight working groups.

Documentation

13. A list of the documents for the Meeting is given as annex II.

Report on the Population Library Development Institute

14. Miss B. Buckner, Head, Technical Information Service, CPC, referred to the success of the Population Library Development Institute which had just concluded and which many participants in the Working Meeting had attended. Miss C. Fogle read out the recommendations made by the Institute (see annex III).

Adoption of the Report of Working Meeting

15. The draft report was considered and adopted at the final plenary meeting, on 15 September 1973.

Vote of thanks

16. A vote of thanks was expressed to ECAFE, CPC and APLIC for sponsoring the Working Meeting.

II. THEME I: ASSESSMENT OF THE NEED FOR A POPULATION INFORMATION NETWORK IN ASIA

17. The first session began with the chairman's introduction to Theme I of the Meeting: The Assessment of the Need for a Population Library Information Network in Asia.

18. She referred in detail to problems of collecting, producing, and disseminating population information, the increasing quantity of materials available, the already existing systems for an information network, the procedures to be developed for a network, and the possible ways for population libraries to help in the development of such a network in the ECAFE region.

Overviews

19. A regional overview was presented by the ECAFE secretariat.

20. The Chief of the ECAFE Population Division stated that ECAFE was interested in helping develop a systematic approach to meeting regional needs for population information through existing and potential channels.

21. According to surveys by his division's Clearing House and Information Section, the situation of the general library was very unequal inside the countries themselves as well as from country to country and many of the small libraries and information resources were not yet known. Therefore, it was considered necessary to make a continuous systematic effort to find those resources. The surveys showed that because of poor communication channels, decision-makers had limited opportunities to utilize fully the facilities and resources of existing research centres.

22. Major problems were (a) the rapid increase in the number of publications and information materials and (b) the relative inaccessibility to and non-utilization of materials because of financial, cultural and language difficulties. Co-operation, division of labour and specialization would overcome some of the problems, it was felt.

23. ECAFE considered that the main question was how to start, in view of the limitations of staff and funds.

24. An overview of work outside the region which could be utilized internally was presented by Miss Buckner.

25. The subject of library networks was of deep and long-standing interest to the CPC Technical Information Service which, along with other organizations and in particular with APLIC, had been working for six years to develop some such systems between population libraries in the United States and Europe.

26. The Asian region had been chosen as the ideal location for the first Training Institute for population librarians and the Working Meeting because of its consistently high level of interest and activity, both in population research and in population library development.

27. One of the valuable aspects of CPC's participation in both the Institute and the Working Meeting was the opportunity given to colleagues to meet and interact.

28. An overview of the value of the information factor in the process of development planning and action programmes, was presented by Mrs. Mallica Vajrathon-Childers, UNICEF Co-ordinator, Development Support Communication Service (DSCS):

29. Having stressed the importance of making information useful and understandable to a particular audience, she described the assistance being given by UNDP and UNICEF, such as:

(a) helping to develop the national communication structure as well as a regional communication network.

(b) offering regional centre facilities for the collection, production and dissemination of developmental projects, including family planning or population, or both.

(c) providing advice on, for example, audio-visual equipment suitable for use in certain climates and available to organizations working on a limited budget.

30. She pointed out that communication in developmental projects needed systematic planning, evaluation and funding, and that the main concern in communication should be how to implement a project in such a way that it would reach and motivate the target audience.

31. An overview of the need for co-ordinated population information flow at national level, was presented by Mr. Asok Mitra, Secretary to the President of the Government of India.

32. He introduced Indian population problems in a historical context, in relation to important publications on population and demography and to the nation's economic and social conditions.

33. He considered that organizations and agencies in the population field should promote awareness of the effects of population growth on the economic and social development of nations, and encourage awareness of the relevance of research data to economic planning. Libraries should be links between information sources and population policies.

34. Bibliographies were most important. It was essential to learn what had been done in the region, the full extent of its population information resources, and what was happening elsewhere. Books and documentary material were librarians' tools. To play their roles efficiently, they needed to identify "who has what, who needs what", and how to organize and distribute the information and materials available.

35. Librarians must contend with the fact that administrators, government officers and policy-makers had limited time for reading and tended to be indifferent to much of the new research literature. Lack of knowledge might sometimes make policy-makers arrogant and dogmatic. Information which was available might be too sophisticated. There might be a diminishing demand for certain types of information. Therefore, it was important for the librarian to be active, even "aggressive", in bringing relevant information to the attention of administrators, decision-makers and others.

36. He believed that the recommendations of the Population Library Development Institute would be very relevant to the creation of an information network. Such a network could provide links between the Governments and research institutions and other non-governmental organizations.

Panel discussions

Assessment of need for network

37. A discussion to assess the need for a network was undertaken by a panel representing global, regional and country levels. After brief introductory statements, the panelists dealt with written questions submitted by those present. Panel members were able to draw on a

reservoir of first-hand information and expertise, acquired in serving from government policy-makers and academic researchers to provincial administrators and family planning field workers. They were also able to call on other specialists present to assist in answering questions.

38. Panel members were :

Global level : Miss Bates Buckner and Miss Catharine A.M. Stubbings, Librarian, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

Regional level : Chief, Clearing House and Information Section, Population Division, ECAFE, and Mrs. Mallica Vajrathon-Childers

Country level : Mrs. Sumardi Reksopoetranto, Librarian, National Training and Research Centre for Family Planning, Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association; and Miss Afsar Mansourzadeh, Librarian, Population Centre, Pahlavi University.

39. Question 1: What was the feasibility of setting up a data bank for the ECAFE region?

40. The main problem was whether to adopt the computer approach or some intermediate approach, the questioner suggesting that the process should start from the national level, feeding material to a regional centre, and holding it available for member-country libraries. He was opposed to beginning with a computer system.

41. Question 2: What co-operation, if any, might be available from George Washington University to assist the proposed information network?

42. A spokesman for the University replied that the university's computer system could be utilized to abstract and index available population and family planning materials, especially on the bio-medical side. ECAFE could be a depository for that vast information, which should be in such a form as to be readily identified, stored and made available to all participating libraries. A panel member emphasized that it was important to decide in the beginning what kind of material was to be collected. Tools for that purpose, such as directories, bibliographies and check-lists, would tell people where to find the information that would be considered for storage and retrieval.

43. Question 3 : Was a world information network on population envisaged, or just an Asian network?

44. The panel suggested that the approach should begin in the smallest area, then proceed to the national level, and then to the regional level. In fact, a world network was envisaged which would develop from a regional basis.

45. Question 4: Could the various kinds of population library be identified which would be brought within the information network?

46. The panel was of the opinion that the information network should be composed of any national libraries that wanted to participate. A form of "central library" should operate at the national level, which would service all the participating libraries in its country. There would be a joint ordering of materials. Some libraries might concentrate on one field of specialization, such as agricultural aspects of population. In that connexion, co-operation between countries was important. The network would also entail close collaboration among government libraries, university libraries and those libraries associated with private and voluntary bodies.

47. Question 5: Was the actual selection of documents to be stored the proper work of a librarian?

48. Experience on that point varied. Sometimes lists and bibliographies were circulated to officials for them to choose the useful material; but if, as often happened, officials failed to respond, then the librarian would go ahead and select documents and issue acquisition lists. In general it was agreed that librarians could pre-select for acquisition if they knew the needs and interests of the users, which could be judged by the requests made. One panel member warned of the "wave" of materials, expecially in the audio-visual field, which was emerging in storage and retrieval systems; libraries must be ready to cope with the volume and the demand.

49. Question 6: Were resources being developed for disseminating information for young people?

50. UNESCO was working on materials for population education in schools, but in general materials for children and youth were still rare. Films explaining the impact of population increase were being produced as discussion material for such bodies as religious youth groups and would be available in different languages. For the time being, such materials were being directed more towards urban youth than rural youth.

51. Question 7: How could one ensure that the information documented was in fact the information needed by users?

52. The panel suggested that close and constant interchange and feed-back between librarians and users was vital to such a guarantee. The point was made that information did not gain any virtue from being stored unless it was also duly communicated to users. Participants were strongly advised to consider their priorities in the selection of materials.

53. Question 8: In the case of IPPF, could a non-member library request assistance in the form of funds or the donation of library materials?

54. It was explained that while IPPF did not give funds to libraries of non-member organizations, it did give its publications to libraries and held available various surplus materials for donation.

55. Question 9: What action was being undertaken to influence political leaders to understand the working of libraries and librarians?

56. It was suggested that librarians sought to supply those leaders with materials which were not only of value to them but in a form that they could read, and at the right time and place. Circulation of useful material should be made at their meeting places, such as committees and conferences; librarians should always be aware of where people were meeting. One participant stressed that, wherever possible, brief and concise accounts of useful material, not lengthy material, should be provided.

57. In closing its discussion, the panel listed topics which would interest the working groups. Included were : the flow of information to decision-makers and researchers; training systems for library work; the compiling of directories and bibliographies; and the improvement of collection and documentation. In registering her approval of the idea of an information network, one of the ladies present said that it would benefit her country by helping to make available information which could otherwise be had only at a high cost in money and time;

the network would also make readily accessible a large volume of research findings the obtention of which by any other means would be difficult or expensive, or both.

Desirability of close understanding and co-operation between librarians, administrators and donor agencies

58. The discussion panel at the second day's meeting comprised representatives of the three "sides" most closely concerned with the proposed establishment of an information network: the library, the administrator and the donor, The Chairman, stressing the desirability of close understanding and co-operation between the three, provided the following guidelines:

The librarian would be most intimately connected with the actual day-to-day operation of the network; the administrator should give full support to the librarian and receive in return the library's effective services; donor agencies would expect libraries to be efficient in handling the information and in rendering service to administrators and researchers.

59. The panel members were:

Library representatives: Mr. S.C. Dhir, Librarian, WHO Regional Office for Southeast Asia; Miss P. Veraprasert, Cataloguer, Library, Faculty of Science, Mahidol University.

Administrator representative: Mr. H. Yunus, Head, Information Division, National Family Planning Board, Kuala Lumpur.

Donor representative: Mr. F. Wilder, Senior Population Adviser, The Asia Foundation.

60. The administrative representative stressed the need for adequate training of the librarian, especially where the library itself was highly specialized. It was only in that way that a librarian could participate intelligently in the work, and stand the chance of putting up good project plans which the administrator would be likely to support. The administrator had the task of securing funds for such projects, but the librarian should be ready to answer questions to help present a good case when funds were being sought. At all times, the librarian should devise ways of building up the "image" of the library.

61. Question 1: Could funding agencies make provision for the production and distribution of research reports?

62. A member of the panel recalled the criteria of funding agencies: the needs that the research programme met should be known; researchers should always remain in close contact with the programme administration; before research results were compiled, a brief and simple summary of the findings should be presented. In general, funding agencies preferred programmes which were action-oriented, and not just academic in nature; proposals should be applicable and workable.

63. Question 2: Would administrators accept librarians in the role of policy-makers?

64. The administrative representative indicated that an affirmative reply could be given so long as the librarian was extremely well-informed and could interpret the information. The donor representative added that those considerations raised most important questions on the total role of librarianship. A librarian's job was not only to receive, store and retrieve material, but also to be able to determine the value of the material, and to provide it in the most readable form. Further, a librarian should provide material which was relevant to the country of the region in which it was to be used.

65. Question 3: Could the ideal qualifications for librarians be defined?

66. The administrative representative emphasized that, in the case of specialized libraries, there should be specialized training in the relevant disciplines—for instance, the libraries represented at a Working Meeting required formal training in population subjects and in communications. He suggested that if an adequate programme for such training were prepared, it would stand a good chance of obtaining funds.

67. Question 4: If formal training in demography for librarians should be difficult to organize, could that problem be solved at least in part by the use of short workshops in demographic techniques for librarian participants within the region?

68. The suggestion implied was welcomed by the panel. One member said that intensive courses in specialized subjects could be very effective, provided it was not forgotten that training was a continuing process requiring refresher courses, especially in a subject such as population, which was expanding and changing very rapidly.

69. Question 5: What should be the nature of the "centre" in the proposed information network, and how would it be funded?

70. It was pointed out that, at a later stage of detailed planning, a regional centre would have to be chosen in the light of country and regional needs. The criteria applied would be those of the needs of the countries to be served. An instance was made of the problems of translation: what should be translated, into which languages, and where? The ideals to be followed were clear: the network would seek to be comprehensive, on the basis of the priority needs of the countries concerned. The network could be of benefit to all participating librarians, enabling them to help one another to obtain the materials which were vitally necessary as the problem of population loomed so large in the world.

71. It was felt that, to begin with, rather more important than the choice of a centre was the determination of the kinds of service to be rendered by the network, and that highlighted the importance of basic policy planning.

III. THEME II: GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF AND FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A POPULATION-INFORMATION NETWORK

Working groups

72. Eight working groups met during the course of the Working Meeting, each to examine one of the topics A-H. Summaries of their discussions follow. For the sake of continuity their recommendations have been grouped under section V, duplications having been eliminated wherever possible.

Topic A. Inventory of library resources and services

73. The basic goals of any inventory should be to enhance co-operation and minimize duplication. While first steps had been taken to provide such inventories, an important problem remaining was their updating, maintenance and distribution. Barriers to effective participation of libraries and information centres were discussed, concern being expressed over the inadequacies of reprographic facilities in many libraries. The necessity of establishing a library network at international, national and regional levels was considered. The network was seen as one means to overcome the language barriers existing within the region. It was noted that many research reports and conference proceedings prepared within a country were often inaccessible to libraries and other potential users because of erratic distribution practices. The need to regularize the practices was recognized.

Topic B. Bibliographic control

74. The term "bibliographic control" was defined as "a system of keeping tabs on existing documents", the main purpose of which should be to facilitate easy acquisition and retrieval of materials. Bibliographic control demanded attention and co-ordination at the three levels of local, national and regional libraries.

76. While depository centres such as national libraries could be very useful for bibliographic centres, in most countries, not all published materials (book and non-book) reached those libraries. In a number of countries, for example Hong Kong, India, Iran and the Philippines, the law required that a copy of any book published within the country be sent to the national centre.

77. The value was stressed of having a parent library in each country, to serve both as a focal point for the smaller libraries and as a channeller to the regional libraries. It was considered that the success of a regional bibliographic control system would depend largely on the proper functioning of the parent library and its affiliates.

78. The group realized that a considerable quantity of information was not published. Copies of various kinds of acquisition lists and fugitive materials could not be made available to other users, including the national libraries which should have the responsibility of bibliographic control at the national level.

Topic C. Standardization of the processing system

79. The classification system used in each library and documentation centre was described. Most of the libraries applied an *ad hoc* eclecticism in their usage, involving the Dewey Decimal System of Classification, the Library of Congress System and the Katharine Dexter McCormick

Library Classification Scheme. In addition, the Sears' List, which has been lacking in terms in the population and related fields, was used for subject headings. The librarians were looking forward to using the CPC *Population/Family Planning Thesaurus* and the *Fertility Modification Thesaurus* of the International Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction. Also of possible use for general subjects was the *Macrothesaurus* of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

80. The distinctions between "subject headings", "thesauri", and "classification schemes" were discussed.

81. In the interests of increased co-operation among librarians and the avoidance of duplication of work, participants favoured the introduction of standards for the preparation of acquisition lists, using a standardized bibliographic format. Catalogue cards should follow uniform citations covering all forms of documents.

82. Regarding the problem of the use of multiple languages within the region, it was hoped that efforts would be made to translate the bibliographic tools and standard sources in the field.

Topic D. Role of training

83. The group recognized the need for trained librarians in making libraries more useful, and for their professional training in basic library techniques as well as in the population and family planning field. The importance of maintaining flexibility in library training was emphasized.

84. It was agreed that regional librarians were divided into those who were professional degree holders and those who did not have such degrees. Problems were being encountered in some countries in getting people into library work, and it was suggested that more responsibility should be placed on library staffs to recruit and train the needed additional staff.

85. The necessity for continuing education for all levels of library staff was emphasized, it being felt that the larger libraries with the appropriate facilities should assist the smaller ones in continuing education training.

86. Librarians were urged to be more service-minded and to bring the services of the library to the attention of the users. Greater efforts should be made to identify all potential users.

IV. THEME III: CREATION AND OPERATION OF AN ASIAN POPULATION INFORMATION NETWORK

Working groups

Topic E. Network at the national and regional levels, and links outside the region

87. The group considered the "information network" as a link whereby participating libraries and documentation centres with similar interests could systematically collect and disseminate information. Librarians and documentalists in each country would hold meetings, initiate among themselves informal exchanges of material, including accession lists, and then gradually develop an established system. Ideally, representatives from governmental, private, voluntary and academic libraries would set up a national secretariat to co-ordinate the network, channelling the country's resources to the regional centre. The size of a library's collection should not be a limiting factor with regard to participation in the network.

88. The group noted that ECAFE was already co-ordinating the dissemination and exchange of information within the region, with many libraries as well as with subregional institutions such as the Inter-Governmental Co-ordinating Committee (IGCC), the International Planned Parenthood Federation — South-East Asia Oceania Region (IPPF/SEAOR). It was recognized that the regional and subregional centres could function effectively only after the establishment of an efficient network at the national level.

89. The training of librarians was an essential factor in the efficient functioning of the proposed network at all levels, and assistance should be given for that purpose.

Topic F. Working procedures for the proposed network

90. During a discussion on the scope and character of the network it was urged that books and publications should not be under the category of supplies in budget-making but under that of acquisition practices either by purchase, or exchange or gift.

91. By "network" the group understood a pattern of library-cum-documentation centres at various levels: namely the immediate user level in the local area, then at the state level, and then at the national level and finally at the regional level.

92. The question was raised of when a library would be considered ready to form part of the network. The group felt that regardless of the many imperfections of any unit, the mere existence of the unit would suffice to qualify it as part of the network, the implication being that by experience and commerce with the other libraries, it would evolve fully as a viable unit.

Topic G. Priority areas for the proposed network

93. The purpose of the information network was to make the existing resources readily available to all.

94. The network must utilize existing resources in libraries, documentation centres and elsewhere. The current situation varied widely, ranging from no library in some countries of the region to sophisticated documentation centres in others. Again, some countries had adequate numbers of trained librarians and facilities for training, while others had only a few qualified librarians and no facilities for training. There was a lack of communication between

the administrators who controlled the budget and the librarians who should serve the needs of administrators and staff members.

Topic H.Contribution by libraries and information centres to World Population Year 1974 (WPY) and how the WPY Secretariat could help them

95. The aims, programmes and projects of WPY were described. Examples of its publications were shown and distributed and conferences planned were described, along with the World Population Conference which was to be held in Bucharest from 19 to 30 August 1974.

96. Suggestions were made regarding types and sources of WPY library displays, and the problem of translation of materials into local languages was discussed.

97. The role of librarians as WPY information resource people was raised, and it was agreed that there should be an active exchange of information and materials about and for WPY.

A task force to assist in establishing an information network

98. The following were unanimously accepted at the final plenary meeting as members of a task force to assist in the creation of a network of national and regional information centres in accordance with the Working Meeting's recommendations:

Mr. A.B.M. Nurul Huq, Librarian, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development

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Mr. L.S. Sodhy, Secretary-General, Inter-Governmental Co-ordinating Committee for Population and Family Planning in South-East Asia (IGCC) (Adviser to the Task Force).

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Network and referral centres at national and regional levels

99. The Working Meeting made the following recommendations:

(1) Librarian and documentalists should take the initiative to increase exchange of population information among themselves and gradually achieve the status of an established national network. The Population Division of the ECAFE secretariat, as the principal supporter of the Working Meeting, should assume responsibility for stimulating and guiding the implementation of the further recommendations listed below.

(2) Each country should have a national network of population and family planning libraries and information centres with a secretariat as the co-ordinating body.

(3) The providing of ready and relevant information, both as a response to inquiries and as an outgoing service anticipating inquiries, was a primary function of the network. The exchange of cards and bibliographical lists produced at various units was also a basic function. At the national level a referral centre would consolidate local information generated at various units; it would also acquire from abroad expensive and other material, that was beyond the resources of a unit to buy.

(4) The referral centre should (a) make an inventory of human resources and materials; (b) produce directories, union lists and bibliographies, and (c) provide current awareness service and the like at the national level; moreover, everything so produced should be at the disposal of a regional centre. In particular, research reports and conference proceedings not commercially published should be channelled at least to a designated depository library which would ensure that the document was made accessible to interested parties.

(5) The referral centre should maintain the equipment for photocopy and other such services. It should maintain micro-reading equipment which was beyond the resources of a unit. It should also subscribe to and store retrospectively periodical sequences supplementary to the holdings of the units.

(6) A manual of procedure clearly defining the working of the network should be produced by the national referral centre. Considering that a vast amount of material would be generated which would be most valuable for international consumption as well, the referral centre should arrange for a brief annotation of national productions to be made available in any language that it deemed appropriate.

(7) The location of the national referral centre should be either a government institution interested in population and family planning or any independent autonomous association, such as the national family planning association, supported by national and international resources.

(8) As a first step towards increasing the exchange of information among themselves, librarians and documentalists as individuals should join APLIC, an organization formed for the purpose of exchange of information relating to problems shared by all population libraries and documentation centres. (APLIC did not charge a membership fee.) A regional meeting of Asian members of APLIC should be held at least once a year. Officers should be elected and committees formed. An international meeting should be planned perhaps every two or three years, to exchange information at an international level. Although it was only one component of an information network, such an association of librarians and documentalists was a way of immediately beginning implementation of the network. The APLIC Board of Directors invited all those attending the Working Meeting or the preceding Institute who

were in charge of libraries or who worked in libraries, to become members by virtue of their participation in those meetings. A schedule of funding for annual regional meetings of Asian members of APLIC should be developed and presented to donor agencies.

(9) A regional association of documentation centres should be established in the Population Division of the ECAFE secretariat.

100. The working groups having agreed on the establishment and operation of a regional information centre, it was proposed that a task force of five members be drawn from among the participants of the Working Meeting to assist in the creation of national and regional information centres in accordance with the recommendations. The task force could draw upon technical advice from ECAFE, UNESCO, APLIC, CPC, IGCC, UNDP/UNICEF Development Support Communication Service (Asia), WHO, and other national, regional and international organizations.

101. A well planned schedule of funding for the task force's activities would be developed and presented to potential funding agencies.

102. The task force would prepare, for submission to ECAFE, before mid-1974, a report of its progress in establishing the information network. If possible, the report would be considered by a regional working meeting, and forwarded to those participating in the World Population Conference of August, 1974 for their information.

103. Consideration would be given to the implementation of the report of the current Working Meeting by approaching collaborating organizations, funding agencies and member Governments.

Qualifications and training of librarians

(10) The staff of population and family planning libraries should be trained not only in basic library routines but also in a general way in the subject field to which the libraries belonged:

(a) in order to assist librarians in areas where there were no training courses given, a source book of the order of that compiled by CPC for the Bangkok Population Library Development Institute should be produced, if possible, in the language of the country concerned;

(b) as part of the training scheme for librarians, every effort should be made to take the opportunities offered by educational and other organizations, foreign foundations, and the like, in the way of stipends, scholarships and fellowships. It was further strongly recommended that those organizations be made more aware of the pressing need for greater support.

(11) For senior levels of staffing there should be a perspective of graduate or master's course in librarianship. For the junior levels of employment, training should be at technician level, such as can be obtained in short-term courses given by professional associations or other institutions.

(12) Training should be envisaged as something more than a mere formal course, and those who were actually working should undergo refresher courses periodically and have the opportunity to participate in professional seminars, conferences and workshops on a national, regional or international level.

(13) Every encouragement should be given to persuade professional staff to take courses in the subject field wherever those were available.

(14) Wherever facilities for in-service training existed in large libraries, staff should be encouraged to undergo such training.

(15) For the purpose of gaining experience, exchange of personnel between libraries in the region should be encouraged wherever feasible.

(16) The role of libraries or documentation centres, or both, within their sponsoring organizations and within the information network should be clarified.

Bibliographic control

(17) At the *individual library* level, standard library practices and procedures should be followed (a) in the preparation of lists of acquisitions; checklists of periodicals; bibliographies of holdings and lists of publications published by other organizations, as well as unpublished documents; (b) in making available the publications of the library's own institutions, and (c) also in making available its own publications to the main library at the national level.

(18) The referral centre at the national level should be designated or established for the purpose of collecting lists and bibliographies prepared by individual libraries and centres, and to compile union lists for dissemination to all interested organizations within the country as well as international centres. Furthermore, a committee should be organized at that level to standardize bibliographic control and procedures.

(19) A list should be created, showing equivalents among classifications currently used in the field of population and family planning.

(20) A multilingual thesaurus should be created for population and related fields, suitable for use in Asia and to serve as a model for other regions of the world.

Standardization of processing system:

(21) A standard format for citations based on an accepted international standard such as the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) should be adopted. That standard could be evaluated by the librarians in the region and their comments and recommendations sent to a central co-ordinating body for consideration toward a revision of the standard.

Funding of network

(22) Funding should be an integrated effort of the countries and the donor agencies, and should be provided for the following:

(a) on-the-job training of librarians and documentalists, including continuing education, both formal and informal, such as the exchange of librarians at the intercountry level within the network region;

(b) equipment and materials at the country level, to facilitate adequate and quick exchange of information among the network participants;

(c) technical assistance.

(23) Inventories of funding sources should be comprehensively compiled.

(24) The resources of the UNFPA should be utilized in the establishment of the network.

(25) Normally, the national Government should fund the network either from its own resources or from such other resources as were available to it.

(26) It was strongly recommended that funding be made available to libraries large and small within the region so that they might have increased capabilities not only to serve their local users but also to participate effectively as part of a regional population network.

World Population Year

(27) The WPY secretariat should help in funding for production of WPY information, including translation into local languages, in view of the need for reaching the "grass-roots" level.

(28) Every librarian should attempt to collect WPY related material and information produced locally and supply copies in English to ECAFE, so that it might be shared with Governments and other institutions; ECAFE should be encouraged to collate and redistribute that material.

(29) Every librarian should act as a local information resource person for WPY, taking positive action in encouraging production and distribution of WPY information and materials; wherever possible, the national statistical offices in the region should be asked to supply both figures and graphic statistical materials in their publications, for local display in libraries.

(30) A copy of the Working Meeting's report should be supplied to the directors of the WPY secretariat, as well as to all participants in the Meeting.

Annex I
ATTENDANCE

1. Participants from the following countries: Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Viet-Nam, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the United States of America

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Annex II
LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Title	Symbol
1. Provisional agenda and work programme	POP/INF.1/1
2. List of documents	POP/INF.1/2
3. List of participants	POP/INF.1/3
4. The development of the Clearing House and Information Section of the Asian Population Programme, by the ECAFE Secretariat	POP/INF.1/4
5. Problems of human communication in population and family planning work, by Erskine Childers, Director, Development Support Communication Service (UNDP/UNICEF), Bangkok	POP/INF.1/5
6. A proposal for systematic collection and dissemination of information on population by the ECAFE Secretariat	POP/INF.1/6
7. Periodicals in the ECAFE region with special interest in population information, by the ECAFE Secretariat	POP/INF.1/7
8. An introduction to information resources in the population field, by Richard Hankinson, Information Officer, Social Development and Demography Programme, OECD, Paris	POP/INF.1/8
9. The Iranian experience in developing a national documentation centre for population and family planning, by Homa Asayesh, Chief, Documentation Centre and Library for Population and Family Planning, Ministry of Health, Tehran, and B.S. Kesavan, Consultant to the Working Meeting	POP/INF.1/9
10. Draft report of the Working Meeting on Asian Resources for a Population Information Network	POP/INF.1/10

Annex III

RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE FIRST POPULATION LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The participants and faculty of the First Population Library Development Institute, recognizing that libraries and documentation centres were vitally important in support of research, policy-making and programme efforts in population and related fields, recommended that the national, regional, international and inter-governmental organizations concerned should take action on the following:

1. Status of libraries and documentation centres

1.1 There should be a promotion of the spirit of information sharing among related groups within the organization.

1.2 The position the library has in the work of the organization should be clearly defined.

1.3 The library budgetary needs should be established by the librarian in collaboration with the administrators and regularly reviewed so as to permit increased services.

1.4 There should be general recognition of the professional level of service which is performed by the library or documentation centre.

1.5 Within an organization there should be fostered the concept of the professional librarian and/or documentalist as a *colleague* of the other professional staff members, rather than simply as a provider of a non-professional supporting service.

2. Scope of responsibilities of the library and the documentation service

2.1 Any aspect of communication work in the organization should be organically related to the functions of the library.

2.2 The responsibility for audio-visual collections should be entrusted to the librarian since the processing of communication materials should follow conventional library practices.

3. Training of information personnel

3.1 Aid should be given in the training and development of those who will produce, collect and disseminate information by:

(a) on-the-job training
(b) awarding scholarships and travel study stipends
(c) holding special training courses in various geographical regions
(d) publication of textbooks, journals, and training guides for librarians and documentalists in population and related fields.

3.2 Centres should be designated where training for documentation sessions can be held at optimum intervals.

3.3 Provision should be made for one or more peripatetic consultants in population documentation who would work in the various countries and aid in solving local problems. These consultants should be drawn from the country in question whenever possible.

3.4 In-service training courses in management practices should be provided for practising librarians and documentalists.

4. Professional association

4.1 Expert working groups of those engaged in documentation should be convened at intervals to review their work and modify it in the light of progress achieved.

4.2 A regional association of librarians and documentalists in the field should be established. This association could eventually publish a journal or newsletter on the order of *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries*, and would hold a regional meeting at least once a year.

4.3 Close co-operation should be encouraged with the several international libraries and professional library associations (such as the Association for Population/Family Planning Libraries and Information Centers), and their regional offices, in the furtherance of the general recommendations above.

5. Availability of information materials

Recognizing the limitations on financial resources and the difficulties in foreign exchange;

5.1 The possibility should be investigated of developing a soft-cover book production facility for key books in the field, enabling limited budgets to go a longer way, as has been done successfully by the British Council Scheme in India, the World Bank Scheme for Economic Libraries, and the Indo-American Textbook Program.

5.2 Work should be initiated to establish co-operative projects for collecting materials and making them widely available to participating organizations, and eventually to everyone needing them.

5.3 At intervals up-to-date reviews of the literature of population and related subjects in several languages should be produced with the objective of attracting the attention of legislators and workers in the field at all levels in the various countries.

5.4 While respecting the copyright obligations, arrangements should be made for the reproduction and dissemination of literature needed by those in the field at low cost to the individual.

5.5 Because of the difficulty in most Asian countries of rapidly obtaining new materials and paying for them in local currency, international organizations should work with booksellers to arrange for acceptance of UNESCO coupons and should work with UNESCO in their distribution.

5.6 Aid should be provided in the publication of specialized indexes and abstracts in this field, using electronic and other means to store and retrieve the information and to provide it on demand.

5.7 Assistance should be provided to libraries for the production of basic aids such as acquisitions lists and checklists of periodicals to facilitate access to material:

(a) These should conform to a standard format whenever possible.

(b) Donor or international agencies should prepare kits of core reference materials in the fields and distribute them to the libraries.

6. Production of basic information tools

6.1 The Institute commends the publication of basic tools such as the ECAFE Population Division directories, the Carolina Population Center directory, *Overview*, the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook*, and others, and recommends that such efforts be continued and that they be expanded upon by other organizations as well.

7. Burden-sharing among libraries and reference centres

Again recognizing the limitations of funds and staff characteristic of most libraries, the following co-operative measures are recommended:

7.1 Library and documentation centres in the field of population research should work together co-operatively towards the implementation of standardized systems of classification and cataloguing, including the thesauri, for population collections.

7.2 Within cities or other manageable areas, there should be co-operative acquisition of journals and books. Co-operative acquisition should be fostered through preparation and exchange of standardized checklists of periodical holdings, acquisitions lists, and the like.

7.3 Indexing and abstracting of journals should be a shared responsibility and not duplicative.

7.4 All methods for helping each other within the existing system should be explored, and dependence on assistance from outside should be held to minimum."